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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 KHARTOUM 000386

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DEPARTMENT FOR D, AF A/S FRAZER, S/E WILLIAMSON, AF/SPG,
AND AF/C, NEA/MAG
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND HUDSON
ADDIS ABABA ALSO FOR USAU
PARIS FOR KANEDA
KAMPALA FOR FITZGIBBON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/15/2018

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [UN](#) [AU](#) [SU](#) [CD](#) [UG](#)

SUBJECT: DESPITE DAKAR ACCORD, SPLM AND SLM BRACE FOR
CHADIAN REBEL OFFENSIVE

REF: A. KHARTOUM 385

[1](#)B. KHARTOUM 00178

[1](#)C. KHARTOUM 00170

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Classified By: CDA Alberto M. Fernandez, Reason: Sections 1.4 (b) and (d)

Summary

[1](#)1. (C) Recounting his efforts to press a diffident President Bashir to support the recent Dakar accord with Chad--including a mechanism to monitor violations--Foreign Minister Deng Alor remains concerned that Khartoum will continue to pursue regime change in N'djamena, he told Senior Assistant to the President Minni Minawi and CDA Fernandez on March 15. The collapse of Deby's government will change the regional balance of power, embolden the NCP to accelerate their efforts to "Arabize" the Sahel and to become more assertive on contentious issues within Sudan, including in Darfur and Abyei. Reporting that First Vice President Salva Kiir is convinced that the SPLM must somehow "defend" Deby's government, Alor claimed that Ugandan President Museveni suggested to Kiir in late January that Kampala and the SPLM send troops into Chad to combat a new rebel offensive. He criticized France for wavering in its support for Deby by signaling to two Chadian opposition leaders that it is "ready to accept new leadership" in N'djamena and pressed the USG to tell Khartoum that the "West is aware of what's happening." End summary.

After Dakar, Offensive Still Looms

[1](#)2. (C) Despite having pushed President Bashir to sign an accord with Chadian President Idriss Deby in Senegal, Foreign Minister Deng Alor told CDA Fernandez and Senior Assistant to the President and Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) Chairman Minni Minawi on March 15 that the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) remains extremely concerned about the potential for an offensive to topple Deby's regime. Minawi indicated that the same night that Bashir signed the Dakar

accord, Chadian opposition forces crossed into Chad (reftel A).

¶3. (C) "If there is a new government in Chad, there will be another genocide in Darfur," warned Alor. "Once Idriss is changed, you will see more instability here in Sudan." He predicted that the NCP would also become more assertive on contentious issues such as Abyei. The collapse of Deby's government would herald a new era of instability across the Sahel and will embolden hard-line elements of the National Congress Party (NCP) to pursue a more aggressive campaign to "Arabize" neighboring countries. Minawi noted that the NCP is already sponsoring a rebel group in Mali, and Alor added that unseating the government of Niger would be "peanuts" if Deby fell. He said that he had been dismayed by leaders from Gambia, Sierra Leone and Mauretania fawning over Bashir at the OIC Summit looking for handouts "as if Sudan was a major power."

Uganda, SPLM to Protect Deby?

¶4. (C) President Yoweri Museveni had initially expressed concern about Chad in late January but called Kiir within the last week, according to Alor, and suggested that Uganda and the SPLM send troops to protect Deby's government. While Alor said that Museveni and Kiir "may or may not have discussed details on assistance" to Chad, Alor underscored that First Vice President Salva Kiir is convinced that the SPLM must somehow "defend Deby." Questioning how this could be done, however, Alor remarked that military intervention could mean "war with the NCP" and the departure of the SPLM and the SLM from the Government of National Unity (GNU). Alor said that Deby had wanted Salva Kiir to visit Ndjamena but Bashir had countered that Deby should visit Khartoum.

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France Wavers

¶5. (C) Alor said that he had learned from French representatives that Paris recently approached Rally of Forces for Change (RFC) leader Timan Erdimi and Union des Forces de la Democratie et du Developpment (UFDD) leader Mahamet Nouri to indicate that France is "ready to accept new leadership." However, Erdimi and Nouri are competing to succeed Deby, so the discussions broke down. Alor criticized the French approach, saying that Paris should encourage the rebels and Deby to negotiate rather than permitting a new regime in N'djamena that will support NCP objectives. "The Government will work with Nouri or Timan to crush the movements in Darfur," he posited. He encouraged the U.S. to "work with Deby directly and not through the French."

U.S. Should Lay Down Marker

¶6. (C) The Foreign Minister cautioned the U.S. against "making a quiet deal with France to let Deby fall" and encouraged the USG instead to tell the NCP that the West "is aware of what's happening." CDA Fernandez noted that, during the Chadian opposition offensive in February, France did not engage with the NCP (Ref. B). By contrast, CDA Fernandez met with several senior NCP officials, including Salah Ghosh and Presidential Advisor Ismail, to underline U.S. opposition to the overthrow of Deby's government and Khartoum's support for the Chadian rebels (Ref. C). Alor said that they SPLM is under no illusions about Deby, but the anarchy and danger of a Khartoum-controlled regime in Chad would be worse, especially for the NCP's opponents in Sudan.

¶7. (C) Describing the proceedings in Dakar, Alor said that NCP advisors "tried to confuse" President Bashir into believing that Deby's government is teetering. "If he's so weak, why would he have left to come to Dakar?" questioned Alor. "You only leave the country if you're in control." Bashir said that only the forces of the Darfur rebel group JEM (made up of Deby's fellow Zaghawa) were keeping Deby in power. Alor said that he pushed Bashir into meeting with Deby over the objections of other members of the delegation. The delegation included Sudan's Permanent Representative to the UN Abdulmahmoud Mohammed, who Alor said he told to "shut up." Alor complained that, except for himself and the partial exception of Advisor Mustafa Othman Ismail, Bashir was surrounded by yes-men in Dakar, as he usually is in Khartoum, who appealed to his worst instincts.

¶8. (C) While Alor's prodding resulted in Bashir agreeing to a meeting with Deby, he refused to do so until the following day, which led to the media reports that he had taken ill. UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, EU Special Representative for Sudan (and political representative for EUFOR) Torben Brylle, AU Chairman Alpha Omer Konare, and the presidents of Gabon and Senegal also attended the meeting. President Wade presented a "comprehensive document" to Bashir and Deby, recalled Alor. However, Deby refused to speak, saying only that "Sudan attacked my country," and Bashir accused Deby of "signing four agreements and then breaking four agreements." The Sudanese President baldly denied any Sudanese support for the Chadian armed opposition.

¶9. (C) To overcome the deadlock, Alor suggested the creation of a monitoring mechanism, and both Bashir and Deby accepted this concept, agreeing that any new accord is useless without such a body. Alor recommended that the mechanism consist of Libya, Congo, Senegal, Gabon, Eritrea, and CENCAD to monitor violations. However, Alor and Minawi expressed little confidence that the agreement will hold. He quoted Chadian Foreign Minister Ahmad Allam-Mi as telling Presidential Advisor Mustafa Osman Ismail while in Dakar that the NCP may want peace but the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) continue to provide military support and encouragement to the Chadian

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opposition. Allam-Mi admitted that "some of the same (support for Darfur's rebels) happens in my country," but not to the extent that SAF and NISS does.

¶10. (C) Comment: We are heartened that the SPLM and Minawi are working more closely together but believe that, while both Kiir and Museveni may be quite concerned about the strategic equation on Sudan's Western border, neither really has the reach to intervene. Alor's description of an arrogant Bashir, lazily relying on his cronies to tell him what is going on in Chad (and in Darfur) does ring true. That Bashir believes that France (and Libya) is hedging its bets on Deby's survival is also likely and may be a true depiction of French ambivalence. What this shifting, complex picture paints is that Sudan's internal struggles are already coloring regional conflicts, with the NCP and SPLM maneuvering, looking for allies and seeking to undermine each other. Both are skilled in the arts of conspiracy, have cash and weapons, and have long-standing ties throughout the region (Kiir has known Deby longer than Bashir has). The SPLM sees the neutralization of Deby as removing still another counterweight to NCP hegemony in Sudan and regionally, and while no fans of Deby's repression, seek deeper American engagement with the Chadian tyrant as a way of keeping Bashir off-balance. End comment.

¶11. (U) Tripoli minimize considered.
FERNANDEZ